

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 08337 071711Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----000159 071713Z /53

O 071647Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3618

S E C R E T BOGOTA 8337

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: CASC, ASEC, PINS, CO  
SUBJECT: STARR KIDNAPPING

REFERENCE: STATE 211309

1. PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR MET THIS MORNING WITH COURIER, MR. BENHUR MANCHOLA. MANCHOLA STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN ASKED BY FARC TO HELP IN THE CASE OF RICHARD STARR AND THAT HE HAD AGREED TO BRING STARR'S LETTER (BOGOTA 8123) TO THE EMBASSY AS WELL AS TO TAKE BACK A REPLY. HE HAD RECEIVED MRS. JENSEN'S LETTER FROM DR. VILLAMIL AND WOULD DELIVER IT TO FARC.

2. FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS PCD THEN SAID THAT WHILE MRS. JENSEN WAS OVERJOYED WITH THE MESSAGE SHE HAD RECEIVED FROM HER SON SHE INSISTED, NEVERTHELESS, ON HAVING POSITIVE PROOF THAT HE WAS STILL ALIVE AND WELL. THIS OBJECTIVE COULD BE MET BY HAVING HER SON REPLY TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTION: "WHAT MUSICAL INSTRUMENT DID YOU PLAY IN YOUR HIGH SCHOOL BAND?" PCD WROTE THE QUESTION IN SPANISH AND ENGLISH ON TOP OF TODAY'S (SEPTEMBER 7) EDITORIAL PAGE OF EL TIEMPO AND TOLD MANCHOLA THAT STARR SHOULD REPLY IN HIS OWN HANDWRITING DIRECTLY BELOW THE QUESTION. MANCHOLA

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ASKED THAT THE REST OF THE PAGE BE CUT-OFF SO THAT HE COULD CONCEAL IT AND SAID THAT HE WOULD PASS IT ON TO FARC.

3. PCD ASKED MANCHOLA WHEN WE COULD EXPECT A REPLY. MANCHOLA SAID THAT HE WOULD BE BACK WITH STARR'S REPLY POSSIBLY AS EARLY AS SEPTEMBER 17 BUT MORE PROBABLY

BEFORE SEPTEMBER 24. HE WOULD CALL PCD AND DELIVER STARR'S REPLY. HE ASKED THAT AT THAT TIME WE HAVE READY THE NAME OF AN INTERMEDIARY TO HANDLE ALL FURTHER CONTACTS WITH HIM.

4. MANCHOLA IS NOT AS SLICK, VOLUBLE OR SUPHISTICATED AS DR. VILLAMIL. HE WAS VISIBLY NERVOUS AND EXPLICITLY CONFESSED IT. HE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT USED TO THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY BUT SINCE THERE WAS A HUMAN LIFE INVOLVED HE FELT IT WAS HIS DUTY TO HELP. UNDER NO CIRCUMNSTANCES, HOWEVER, WOULD HE CARRY THE RANSOM PAYMENT. THAT WAS TOO DANGEROUS AND HE COULD GET INTO A LOT OF TROUBLE. AS HE WAS LEAVING HE ASKED WHETHER WE COULD HELP HIM WITH THE COST OF TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN NEIVA AND BOGOTA (500 PESOS, ABOUT US \$13.00) PCD REPLIED HE WAS NOT AUTHORIZED TO OFFER A REPLY BUT WOULD CONSULT WITH MRS. JENSEN AND WOULD HAVE AN ANSWER FOR THE NEXT MEETING. PLEASE ADVISE.  
JOHNSTON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** CASC, ASEC, PINS, CO, (STARR, RICHARD)  
**To:** STATE  
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